SC/ST Employees in VSNL

1414. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. had undertaken evaluation of work performance of its many SC/ST employees and found 75 per cent of them as unfit/marginal as a prelude to their retrenchment;

(b) whether VSNL has recruited a large number of new employees with no representation for SC/ST categories; and

(c) whether VSNL had given an undertaking to the Centre on safeguarding the interests of SC/ST employees even after disinvestments, with the Centre still being a majority stake holder?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, the Company is not resorting to performance evaluation of the SC/ST employees of VSNL as prelude to retrenchment. The Company has a System of carrying out an annual performance review for all its employees and this is similar to the process adopted by many organizations.

The performance is evaluated against specific objectives/job carried out and not on the basis of caste/creed/religion etc. The statement that 75% of the people have been rated as unfit/marginal is incorrect.

(b) The employment of new employees is done as per the needs of the business and the same is, on merits and qualifications after a thorough and objective selection process.

(c) There is no undertaking given by VSNL to the Centre at the time of disinvestment to protect SC/ST employees on roll at that time. However, at the time of disinvestment, an assurance was given in writing by Panatone (the Strategic Partner), that no employee in VSNL would be retrenched for a period of two years instead of one year as provided in the Shareholders Agreement, and that the present salary, wages and prerequisites would not be altered and no adverse change would be made in the retirement benefits which the employees on the roll of VSNL were eligible. These assurances have been fulfilled and complied with. Further it is clarified that the Central Government is not a majority shareholder in the company and holds only 26.12% stake.

Disposal of surplus land by VSNL

1415. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:
SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Department of Telecommunication is proposing to dispose of 773 acres of surplus VSNL land in Delhi, Pune, Chennai and Kolkata;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether market price of the land has been assessed; and

(d) whether Government has examined other options for using this land with the ownership of the land under Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b)In the meeting of 7th December, 2007 of Full Telecom Commission, it was decided to sell the surplus Land of VSNL through auction in which VSNL if they so like can also participate.

(c)The market price of the land was assessed by Govt, in March, 2007.

(d) Yes. All the options available in the Share Holder Agreement (SHA) about the disposal of the surplus land of the VSNL were fully discussed and deliberated.

Telephone connections of Bihar Sharif

1416. SHRI RAJNITI PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a)whether a large number of telephone connections under Nalanda Exchange, Bihar Sharif Division have been disconnected due to non-payment;

(b)if so, the details of such connections together the details of dues against each of them;

(c)since when and why these dues remained outstanding;

(d)whether most of these connections remained out of order due to theft of underground cables;

(e)if so, the durations of which these connections remained out of order, faultwise;

(f)whether rebate as per rule has been taken into consideration while calculating the dues; and

(g)if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b)Does not arise in view of (a) above. However, details of telephones disconnected due to non-payment are given in Annexure (Total No. of connections in Nalanda Exchange are 1400).

(c)Details of pending dues are available in the Statement *(See* below). The dues remained outstanding because of non-payments of bills by customers,

(d)No, Sir.

(e)Does not arise in view of (d) above.

(0 Yes, rent rebate is given for the faulty period as per rule. However, these numbers are disconnected due to non-payment and are not under fault.

(g) Does not arise in view of (0 above.